

What a year for TVMYS. We experienced a couple of hurricanes. First came Irma with about 18" of rain in a 24-hour period. Our pond level rose to about 3 blocks down on the wall between us and the mail facility. As most of you know, Alan and I raced using the tree as a marker. Cleanup was a chore, but lots of members pitched in and we got the job done. However, it took months for the water to recede to its normal level. It's now back to normal, but it left us with about 15 feet of mud where the standing water killed the grass. Fortunately, the civil engineers who laid out The Villages did a magnificent job. The ponds overflowed, the golf courses flooded, etc., but not a single home was damaged by flood waters.

The second hurricane came without warning when one day after sailing Alan Perkins announced that he was retiring effective Dec. 31 and somehow, I got "selected" as your new commodore. Big shoes to fill for Alan gave us 8 years of service and basically built the Club up from nothing. I'll do my best to see that the growth continues and we prosper as a Club.

Things slow down a bit when the snowbirds depart for cooler climates. However, it's a good time for the frogs to hone their racing skills and try out new sails, rigs and boats. This summer there were several swaps made as skippers opted to try a different boat or sail. I personally used the time to work on my sail tuning skills.

The good news about summer sailing at Ashland Pond is that we rarely keep score. Therefore, there is little at stake for each race. We can move mast position, work on getting the rig vertical or try different draft settings. Also, we're testing new gear. I burned out a couple of winches before settling on the RMG. It may be more expensive, but it's reliability can't be beaten. Lots of sailing with fleet size for the Soling's and EC`12a averaging about 6 boats answering the starting signal. Also, the winds tend to be a bit lighter during the summer months.

With the advent of fall, we start thinking of regattas. Our first of the fall was to host the Soling National Regatta. Dave Brawner flew in and took on the duties of Race Director. What a successful three-day regatta. We had 36 entrants from several states requiring three fleets and continuous racing. At least the wind gods cooperated with steady winds from the east for all three days. As always, putting on a regatta of any size or stature, it depends on help from the local club and you all came through as usual. The annual fall EC-12 Gator Regatta hosted by the club began the new season for the Florida circuit. A number of local sailors participated in the event. The Regatta report is posted on the site.

Now that fall has officially arrived, we're getting 10-12 boats on the starting line. We need the practice of racing in a larger fleet with more interactions, but it takes some getting used to. It makes for great practice as we prepare for the coming regatta season. See you all this winter.